

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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SUBJ: PREMIER SACKS TWO LEFTIST MINISTERS

REF: A) 77 BRIDGETOWN 1244, B) 77 BRIDGETOWN 1791(NOTAL)

1. DOMINICA PREMIER PATRICK JOHN ANNOUNCED ON DOMINICA RADIO JANUARY 25 THAT HE HAD DISMISSED FROM HIS CABINET MINISTER OF WORKS AND COMMUNICATION MICHAEL DOUGLAS AND MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND WELFARE FERDINAND PARILLON. JOHN ALSO USED THE BROADCAST TO DECLARE THAT THERE IS NO PLACE FOR COMMUNISM IN AN INDEPENDENT DOMINICA.

2. DOUGLAS AND PARILLON WERE THE TWO MOST LEFTIST MEMBERS OF THE DOMINICA LABOUR PARTY GOVERNMENT AND HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO BREAK WITH PREMIER JOHN SINCE THE MIDDLE OF 1977 (REF A). DOUGLAS, THE OLDER BROTHER OF EVEN MORE RADICAL LEFTIST ROSIE DOUGLAS,
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TERMED HIMSELF A "LEFT-WING MAVERICK" IN THE JOHN GOVERNMENT WHILE PARILLON LIKED TO DESCRIBE HIMSELF AS A "GENUINE SOCIALIST". JOHN AND HIS CONSTANT COMPANIONS, ATTORNEY GENERAL LEO AUSTIN AND FINANCE MINISTER VIC RIVIERE, APPARENTLY JOINED WITH THE MORE CONSERVATIVE AND DOMINANT WING OF THE RULING DLP TO OUST THE TWO LEFTISTS IN WHAT, FOR PREMIER JOHN, IS AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY DECISIVE ACT.

3. THE NEW MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS IS OSBOURNE THEODORE, WHO UNTIL NOW HAS BEEN THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR COOPERATIVES IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER. INSTALLED AS MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND WELFARE IS RANDOLPH BANNIS, AN ELECTED MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY WHO HAS TO NOW WORKED ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND VILLAGE COUNCIL MATTERS. BANNIS IS A FARMER BY TRADE.

4. COMMENT: THIS MOVE BY PREMIER JOHN OBVIOUSLY STRENGTHENS HIS HAND AND THAT OF THE MODERATE WING OF HIS PARTY AND WILL TAKE SOME OF THE CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENTS' ECONOMIC POLICY AND PERSONAL CONDUCT (PARILLON TRIED TO FORCE THE POLICE TO INVESTIGATE AUSTIN, REF B) OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE MOVE ALSO PUTS DOUGLAS AND PARILLON OUT ON THE STREET WITH THEIR LEFTIST OPPOSITION AND PROBABLY INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA WITH A MORE VIABLE LEFTIST ALTERNATIVE. JOHN'S TASK IN THE FUTURE, THEREFORE, WILL NO LONGER BE TO CONTROL THE LEFTISTS WITHIN THE GOVT, BUT TO ISOLATE AND BEAT THEM IN PUBLIC. JOHN AND THE MODERATES WILL START AHEAD, BUT WILL HAVE TO WORK HARD TO KEEP THEIR LEAD. END COMMENT.
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